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PREFACE

121 The purpose of this study is to contribute to an understanding of all the phases of economic reconstruction of one of the 178 Baltic republics, Lithuania. The subject assumes greater interest when it is taken into consideration that Lithuania was impoverished during the World War, that even its few small industries had been destroyed during the hostilities, and that Lithuania had no natural resources such as gold, silver, iron, and coal. In the comparatively short period of her independence—twenty-two years—Lithuania improved her agriculture, developed her foreign trade, and made very substantial progress in every branch of her economic life. Before the Soviet Russian occupation in June, 1940, Lithuanian agricultural products reached the farthest corners of the world and were known for their excellent quality. Yet most of the valuable enterprises that enabled Lithuania to participate in the world market did not exist before the World War, when Lithuania was part of Russia.

600 The author gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to Dr. Michael T. Florinsky of Columbia University for his generous criticism during the preparation of this volume; to Jonas Budrys, Consul General of Lithuania at New York, for his encouragement and for the use of his library; and to Joseph A. Boley for his courteous assistance in shaping the final form of the manuscript.

● 178 It is a known fact that, refusing to accept the terms of the Curzon line, the Poles occupied more than one third of Lithuania's territory. But even after this blow Lithuania not only survived as an economic entity, but in twenty-two years of independence made much greater progress economically and culturally than during her 123 years as part of Russia, proving that even a small nation enjoying an independent status can make a tremendously greater advance in her economic and cultural life than the same nation when she is forced to accept "protection."

000 Even now, while World War II is being waged, voices are heard blaming the small nations which, it is said, aggressors used as tools, playing them against each other only to destroy them later, one by one. While it is true that the small countries were rendered helpless when the mightier ones which had stood on the side of justice were overpowered by the aggressors, nevertheless these small ones cannot be blamed. The fault lies with those big powers which, by disarming themselves, physically and morally encouraged the belligerents.

It is a known fact that the small countries were the most loyal supporters of the League of Nations, though they did not always gain justice, international law not having been enforced as well as it might have been. Nevertheless, the only hope of small nations is the victory of democracy and the rebirth of the League of Nations which will have authority and will not hesitate to exert it, by force if necessary.

There was nothing fundamentally wrong with the League of Nations prior to this second World War, barring the fact that it had no physical power with which to enforce its decisions and consequently hesitated to act on the side of justice in violations of international law. If the League of Nations had not hesitated to act when Vilnius was seized by Poland

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According to the agricultural census of 1930, the number of farms in Lithuania and their areas are as stated in Table 7.

TABLE 7

CENSUS OF FARMS

FARM SIZE (*Acres*)	NUMBER OF FARMS	COMBINED AREA (*Acres*)
2.5– 12.5	53,463	380,722
12.5– 25.0	78,237	1,440,338
25.0– 37.5	59,572	1,788,349
37.5– 50.0	33,236	1,408,275
50.0– 75.0	34,197	2,042,511
75.0–125.0	20,597	1,885,111
125.0–250.0 and over	8,078	1,725,742
TOTAL	287,380	10,671,048

Through the land reform, over 45,000 new farms have been established and over 200,000 persons (including new settlers and their families) have been provided with regular occupation and permanent homes. This undoubtedly has brought beneficial results to the social and economic life of the country.[15] Moreover, the land reform has undoubtedly been a means of substantially raising the country's productivity, to the benefit of both the state and the individual farmer.

When Soviet Russia occupied Lithuania on June 15, 1940, a still more radical "land reform" was proclaimed by the Soviet-appointed puppet government. All land was proclaimed state property. Consequently, the farmer-owners suddenly became only managers of government property and, therefore, could not sell, exchange, or give away their

[15] Kriksciunas, *op. cit.*, p. 34; Elbergas, *op. cit.*, pp. 64–68.

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Chapter VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

178 From the facts and figures cited in the preceding pages we see that in the short period of twenty-two years of independence since the World War little Lithuania has lacked neither initiative nor industry. Surveying the devastation left behind by the three neighboring armies which had overrun the country at various periods of the war, Lithuania gathered her tiny forces and resolutely set about the gigantic task of reconstruction. Perhaps it was this grim determination and buoyant enthusiasm in their regained freedom that gave this new republic the necessary momentum. Perhaps it was the inspiration of the glorious days of Vytautas when Lithuania was a world power combined with the well-known native trait of dogged perseverance that enabled this ancient Baltic people to turn from problem to problem with boundless vigor.

That an objective résumé of her efforts and accomplishments does not find the country wanting in creditable results may be seen by even a cursory glance at almost any one of the tables in this book. To compare the Lithuania of 1939 with the Lithuania of the early post-war years is to acknowledge that great strides were made in her agriculture through the well-planned land reform, the development of coöperatives, and the improvement of livestock husbandry

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and dairying. Furthermore, her war-torn industry has been reconstructed to suit her own particular needs. 178

Her foreign trade has been showing almost continuous expansion. Her increased production, as well as consuming power, bespeak an attendant higher standard of living. All these facts certainly justify Lithuania's participation in the family of nations and her existence as a separate independent economic entity.

The future course of Lithuania's economic development cannot be predicted because of the series of political crises of 1939, 1940, and 1941. On March 22, 1939, Lithuania was forced to agree to the cession of Klaipeda to Germany. Though Lithuania was given a so-called "free zone," the effect was as of being forced to gasp for air with someone else's lungs. Through this cession Lithuania not only lost 703,741 acres of territory (5.1 percent of her total area) but was deprived of 13 percent of her industry, with 26 percent of her wage earners. The total industrial production of Klaipeda territory in 1937 amounted to 116 million litas, or 30.7 percent of Lithuania's total production. 648

Before Lithuania had time to adjust her national economy to the new conditions, the war broke out between Germany on the one side and Poland and the Allies on the other. This upset the normal economic life even more. The immediate result of the war was the partition of Poland between Germany and, as a silent partner, Soviet Russia. This was soon followed by the signing of mutual assistance pacts between Soviet Russia on the one side and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on the other. Baltic states actually had no other choice than to sign on the dotted line.

Lithuania signed her pact on October 10, 1939, thereby regaining Vilnius, with 2,569 square miles of territory and

538 Anykščiai, although the latter was written in the High Lithuanian dialect. In addition there were translations from foreign literatures, e.g. parts of Milton's Paradise Lost and other works.

/228/ D. The Period of the Prohibition on Printing (1865-1904)

1. The Epoch of Aušra

565 178 At the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century occurred two political events which had a basic effect on the further social, national, and thereby also literary development of Lithuania. In the year 1861 the end of serfdom in the government of Kowno was decreed by Alexander II. The peasants were freed of all villeinage and services and now sat as free men on free soil and land. The liberation of the peasants effected a far-reaching social differentiation: until now social rise from the class of serfs was possible only in individual cases, specifically where the landlord accidentally became aware of a special talent and was inclined to foster it. This rise itself, however, was limited at best to an education for the priesthood. The entrance into a higher class, which, as we have shown before, was almost completely under the influence of Polish culture and language, led in most cases to the result that the few who rose in this way from the peasantry became strangers to their own people and language and felt themselves as belonging to the class of Polish "lords." Only at the moment when the whole peasantry became free, when possibilities for advancement were created not only for individuals but for all the people, could a Lithuanian educated class be established. Again, only this class could become the bearer of the new Lithuanian idea as well as all the intellectual and artistic efforts connected with it which from now on could be developed on a broader base. Besides the former Polish educated class a Lithuanian class made its appearance.

The Polish uprising, which took place in the

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178 year 1863 and also flared up at individual spots in Lithuania, led at first to a certain favoring of the Lithuanians above the Poles /229/ by the Russian government. Thus the Lithuanians were granted a gymnasium in Marijampolē and a teacher's seminary in Veveriai. Also, with the ending of serfdom, which took place in 1863 under the imprint of the revolution, the peasants were spared the ransom. A series of favorable circumstances, the natural condition of the soil, the application of the Code of Napoleon, the removal of the mixed field system and the vicinity of East Prussia led to the further result that in the following decades the material, and thereby also the spiritual, development of the peasantry in Suvalkija progressed faster than in the remaining sections of Lithuania. A prosperous peasantry arose here, from whose sons the nucleus of the new Lithuanian educated class was developed. The Russian government, striving to suppress the Polish influence which had shown itself in the revolution of 1863, granted the Lithuanian school graduates scholarships to attend the universities of St. Petersburg and Moscow, in order to Russify them there, but in any case to remove them from Polish influence. But the development could no longer be held back, the Russification miscarried, and from among the graduates of this gymnasium went forth the first leaders who fought for the right of the people to
195 their own cultural development. The predominant position which the area of Suvalkija assumed in this intellectual development--for at first it was only a development--is also illuminated by the fact that the Suvalkijan dialect was made the basis of the literary language which was now gradually formed. What Marijampolē was for the south, Mitau later became for the north, since here too, as a result of the special privileges of the Baltic Germans, the Lithuanian element found a place for independent development.

565 178 Among the young Lithuanian intelligentsia there arose very quickly a differentiation between those who obtained a religious education and those who turned to the secular sciences. Both groups, however, found themselves together in the cultural battle which was now breaking out against * the Russification plans of the Czarist government. 538 661 Then /230/ the latter took a step which had never happened before in the history of peoples by proclaiming, on August 6, 1865, that six governments of western Russia were forbidden to print writings in Latin letters. If this decree, which was not repealed until April 24, 1904, was aimed above all at the Polish literature, it also had at first the effect of a death blow on the further development of the young Lithuanian literature. It soon became evident that it was impossible to use the Russian alphabet for the Lithuanian language, and thus this prohibition was equivalent to a prohibition of all Lithuanian literature, including the religious, which tended to arouse special bitterness in this Roman-Catholic country. In order completely to paralyze the development of a Lithuanian educated class and therewith the awakening of an independent national consciousness, there followed a second prohibition according to which Lithuanians in their home provinces could not obtain any posts in the Russian government service. Thus the lay intelligentsia which was now arising, insofar as it turned to government service, was removed into the interior of Russia. A knowledge of these circumstances is a basic condition for the understanding of the further development of Lithuanian literature, for it is now clear why the further intellectual and literary development was carried forward from now on by forces that started their activities outside the political borders of the country. In addition it explains why, in this struggle for existence, whose center of gravity lay from now on on the